



Will You Be Part of the Solution?

by Barb Kennedy, PHR

We hear a lot these days about employers who are unable to find employees who have a good work ethic, come to work on time every day and contribute to getting the job done. Times have certainly changed and this issue may not resolve itself in the near future, but there are some things that can be done to help.

If you're an employer who hires more youth during the summer, you have a great opportunity to help them grow and develop as motivated workers with a good work ethic. It's a great feeling to help someone figure out how to be successful and become a productive confident person.

A great manager cares about each and every employee and will go out of his or her way to create a culture of learning, a productive team and make it easy for smart people to do good work. Display patience and persistence so those young people can learn that success isn't about instant gratification, but years of hard work and dedication.

Young people expect employment to be a win-win relationship regardless of the length of employment. Check out the story of Master Lube in Billings and how Bill Simmons created –unofficially– “the highest volume two-bay lube center in the World” and continues to help his employees realize their dreams. www.masterlube.com

Promote learning of all kinds, unplanned, incidental and informal, together with a variety of forms of training, e-learning, short workshops and on the spot opportunities. Give them the opportunity to practice and develop their skills and help them step out of their comfort zones.

Provide constant feedback and access to management. Share information. Make new technology available to them.

Last but not least, set the tone for the culture of the workplace. Give and take feedback well, so you don't encourage defensive, passive aggressive behavior from the employees. Model the behavior you want from the rest of the employees so you never need to wonder why your team behaves in unproductive ways that are “strangely familiar.”